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ABSTRACT

Results obtained from a questionnaire sent to 152 community colleges in 7 states (California, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Texas, and Washington), of which 90 replies contained useable data, concerning various possible sources of funding for community services are provided. These results include the following: (1) private sources are seldom used by public community colleges in the seven states; (2) California leads the other six states in the percentage received from local district taxes; Florida, by contrast, funds the majority of its community services programs from state funds; Michigan has been the most successful in the use of federal funds; and (3) many community services directors felt that having the participant pay was their most successful approach. A table provides the study data. (DB)

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# Sources of Funding of Community Services in Public Community and Junior Colleges

by

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# SOURCES OF FUNDING OF COMMUNITY SERVICES in Public Community and Junior Colleges

## Overview

Availability of funds is a continuing concern for any community service director. With the squeeze of inflation, colleges are under constant pressure to accomplish more with less money: no program or activity is secure, least of all community services.

In the continuing battle to justify the need for community services, hard data is needed. Although considerable writing has been done about the scope and goals of community services and about many different approaches to funding, no information exists on what proportion of community services funds comes from various sources.

To develop better information about sources of funding, a national survey was conducted in March 1973 to learn what portion of community services budgets came from various sources. In addition, respondents were asked to identify their most successful and/or most innovative sources of funding for community services.

As would be expected, a wide divergency exists among various states and among individual colleges as to both the major sources of funding and the diversity of means used to acquire funds. The open-ended responses provided good ideas for other community colleges to try. Unfortunately, many community services programs appear to be structured around requirements of public funding sources rather than the needs of people. Between the lines can be seen evidence of the continuing struggle to delineate and legitimatize the community services dimension of many community colleges.

## Previous Studies

As a first step in the survey, an attempt was made to locate previous research and writing about the financing of community services. The first source consulted was the material published during the three years of the Community

Services Project at the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges. Next, a search was made of the ERIC data base which contains abstracts of educational research reports and periodical literature articles in education. The computerized ERIC/DIALOG system[1] provided a quick and relatively inexpensive way to search a tremendous amount of material. The result was the identification of a total of four items which dealt in some way with the funding of community services.

Erv Harlacher in his book, The Community Dimension of the Community College,[2] sets forth the major problems in funding community services. His nationwide interviews pinpointed the ways in which the type of funding available and the level of importance of community services in a college influence the quality of its program. Numerous private and public sources of grants and assistance were identified also.

Gunnar Myran's study, Community Services in the Community College,[3] has a short section on financing patterns. He indicates that administrative costs are usually provided from the general operating budget of the college, whereas programming costs are normally self-supporting. The policies of individual states regarding the use of public funds for various kinds of courses directly affects the types of community services offered. Myran believes, however, that the most successful community services programs work in cooperation with other community agencies and groups and seek out alternate sources of funding and manpower.

George Traicoff's working paper for the Community Services Project, Obtaining Financial Support for Community Services,[4] is a systematic coverage of the dimensions of various funding sources plus some guidelines for proposal writing. He did not attempt to deal with the relative importance of different funding sources.

Arnold Fortine dealt with the costs of financing programs as one part of his

dissertation, A Study of Community Services in the Community Colleges of the State University of New York.[5] He found that greater support was available for more traditional programs, namely adult education, and less in the area of community development. He also assessed the level of commitment to community services in the 28 colleges surveyed finding only 15 had made a full commitment.

These four writers have identified the full dimension of community services funding. However, none dealt with a quantitative comparison of the relative importance of the various sources.

The Survey

There are many barriers and limitations to the successful completion of any survey research. Throughout this study, every effort was made to maximize the quantity and quality of data in terms of its usefulness to leaders in community college community services.

Although a national sample was desired, time and financial constraints limited the scope of the survey. Since one objective was to look for patterns of funding which community college community services programs might wish to follow, the decision was made to survey the seven pacesetter states identified by Medsker and Tillery in their profile book for the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education.[6] California, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Texas, and Washington were seen as states which "have been able to develop public community college systems into impressive models for the rest of the nation."[7]

The 1972 Yearbook of the National Council on Community Services[8] was used as the source of names and addresses of community services directors in the seven states. A sample was drawn by selecting every other college. A letter and post card reply questionnaire were mailed to a total sample of 152 community colleges. By keeping the letter and the reply simple, a fast and adequate size response was hoped for. In addition, one week after the initial mailing, a follow-up postcard

was sent to those who had not yet responded.

No attempt was made in the letter to define community services. Even though there are major differences among states in terms of what functions are included within community services, it was felt that any attempt to structure the responses would lose more than it would gain because of the added complexity and additional time needed to complete the reply. Since all the individuals questionnaired had responded to the request by George Traicoff for the yearbook listing, it was assumed that they had a basic concept of and identification with community services.

The qestionnaire listed various possible sources of funding for community services and asked the respondent to indicate the percentage that his college received from each. Three descriptive questions about the college were asked covering the number of day students, type of college (urban, suburban, rural), and type of control (public or private). At the bottom of the reply card, two lines were left for indicating "Most successful and/or innovative sources of funding for community services."

The Results

By the announced cut off deadline, a total of 101 replies had been received. Of these 90 contained useable data. The response pattern ranged from a high of 91% from the State of Washington to a low of 44% from the State of New York. Only three of the replies were from private two-year colleges so, therefore, these replies were part of the eleven dropped. Thus, the results deal only with public two-year colleges.

Time limitations did not permit a sophisticated computer analysis of the data. In looking at the raw data, it was evident that state funding policies were the dominant factor in each college's sources of funding for community services. As a result, comparisons on the basis of student enrollment or type of location would probably have not yielded significant differences and any significant results would

have been difficult to explain.

Table 1 shows the data by states and gives the average percentage received from each source and the number of respondents who indicated they used a particular source. As can be seen, only a few colleges take advantage of available private sources of funds. Fees charged the participant ranged from a low of 5.4% in California, where the local district community services tax exists, to a high of 91.2% in Washington. Actually eight of the nine respondents in Washington indicated that community services programs had to be completely self-supporting and that 100% of their funds came from registration and admission charges. New York and Texas are two other states in which fees provide over half their funds.

In the use of public funds, the comparison between local district and state government reflects the method used to finance each state's community college system. California leads the other six states in the percentage received from local district taxes (92.6%) due to the use of their permissive override tax of 5¢ per $100 of local district assessed valuation. In fact, 15 of the 31 California respondents indicated that the local district tax was their sole source of funding for community services and eight identified the community services tax as the most successful and innovative source. Florida, by contrast, funds the majority of its community services programs (71%) from state funds. Michigan appears to have been the most successful in the use of federal funds for community services programs with 14.4% received from that source. Directors indicated particular success with Higher Education Act Title 1 funds. They also utilized a variety of special purpose federal program grants.

Private sources are seldom used by public community colleges in the seven pacesetter states. The sample of colleges using private sources was at most one or two colleges per state. Michigan leads the pacesetter states with 3.8% of

their community services funds coming from foundations. Grants by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation have had a major impact on certain colleges.

The miscellaneous category was also influenced by one or two respondents in a state. Those who specified a source under "Other" indicated charges for use of facilities by various organizations and groups. Private individual gifts and volunteer time were also identified.

In response to "most successful and/or innovative sources," several common threads were seen. Mention was made of several federal programs. Californians indicated co-sponsorship and multiple sources of funding, such as fees and public funds, as having been successful. In Illinois, the Illinois Junior College Board and the state public service grant fund were identified by several colleges. Some colleges felt that since state apportionment funds were available for credit classes, their development of community services courses for credit had been a creative way of receiving public funds for their programs. Finally, many community services directors felt that having the participant pay was their most successful approach.

The Future

It is all too obvious that, despite the great strides made in community services in the last five years and the greater awareness generated by the AACJC Community Services Project and the National Council on Community Services, the battle for full acceptance of the community services dimension is far from won. The lack of certainty of funding is indicative of the continuing need to justify the existence of community services and to be resourceful in obtaining funds.

Although there is validity in the argument that the participant should share in the cost, it would seem that the college budget should support the administrative leadership and organization overhead as part of the basic commitment to the philosophy of a comprehensive community college. In addition, participants should

not have to fund construction of facilities. Finally, an innovation or seed money fund should be made available each year to underwrite the start of new programs and services until each can prove whether it can become self-sustaining for direct costs. Even in California, the generosity of the community services tax should not limit the college from looking for additional sources of funding, thus providing that much more service to the community.

Since community services is becoming for many community colleges the cutting edge for new and innovative educational and cultural services, community services needs to lead the way in involving the college totally with its community. Since the sources of funding for community services can never be taken for granted, directors need to be ever creative in tapping new sources of funding. Claire Olson, Associate Director of Governmental Affairs, American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, has set the tone for reaching federal sources this coming fiscal year. While the cutbacks in many favorite programs, such as Title 1, are depressing, she feels that community services directors must look for community services implications in all federal programs.[9] By knowing community needs, it is possible to spot federal or state programs which could help. Careful documentation and political arm-twisting can produce results. Too often, only the proven paths are followed, resulting in community colleges competing with each other for limited funds. Instead, by searching out specialized or lesser known programs, better success can result. In this manner, the current low priority being given to community services in federal budgets can be partially overcome.

Olson believes that one must first understand current national priorities and then use them to local advantage. She lists the following ideas:

> "To some extent, community services could be worked into aid to institutions serving disadvantaged students (Title III - HEA) and aid in discovery of new methods of pedagogy.

Additionally, funds for some institutions will be available through the University Year for Action program of the ACTION agency (the collective of volunteer programs) which gives students credit for work in community services projects. Also, cooperative education (Title IV-D HEA) projects could have some community services implications.

Projects for the aging through the Social and Rehabilitation Service's Administration on Aging are a logical and needed community service.

Projects for businessmen through the Small Business Administration and the Office of Minority Business Enterprise (Department of Commerce) also have possibilities. The Endowments for the Arts and Humanities have various cultural programs of interest to communities as well as students."[10]

The Rural Development Act and Special Revenue Sharing are also potential sources.

In the final analysis, it is personal commitment to action by community college leaders that will make community services continue to grow.

## NOTES


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7. IBID., pp. 25-27

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9. Olson, Claire, Funding Implications of Recent Legislation for Community Services. Presentation at Forum 5, American Association of Community and Junior Colleges Convention. Anaheim, California: February 26, 1973

10. Letter from Claire T. Olson, Associate Director of Governmental Affairs, American Association of Community and Junior Colleges. Washington: March 20, 1973.

TABLE 1: Sources of Funding for Community Services

| Replies | State | | Fees Charged Participants | Public Funds | | | Private Funds | | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Local | State | Federal | Business & Labor | Foundations | |
| 31 | California | No. | 13 | 31 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | | % | 5.4% | 92.6% | 1.5% | .7% | 0 | 0 | .3% |
| 10 | Florida | No. | 7 | 0 | 10 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| | | % | 23.5% | 0 | 71% | 1% | 1% | 0 | 3.5% |
| 12 | Illinois | No. | 11 | 11 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | | % | 23.1% | 28.8% | 39.3% | 5.4% | 1.7% | 0 | 1.7% |
| 10 | Michigan | No. | 9 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| | | % | 43.3% | 16.7% | 21.4% | 14.4% | .7% | 3.5% | 0 |
| 11 | New York | No. | 10 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | | % | 52.5% | 16.6% | 27.8% | 2.5% | .5% | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | Texas | No. | 7 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | | % | 73.6% | 10.7% | 12.1% | 2.9% | 0 | 0 | .7% |
| 9 | Washington | No. | 9 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | | % | 91.2% | 0 | 5.0% | 3.7% | .1% | 0 | 0 |
| 90 | Pace Setter States Average | % | 44.7% | 23.6% | 25.4% | 4.3% | .6% | .5% | .9% |